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# HOLDING TO THE DREAM

By W. H. P. FAUNCE

THE baccalaureate sermon to the graduating class of Brown University upon its 150th anniversary by President W. H. P. Faunce was a dissertation upon the dreams of youth. Dr. Faunce's sermon is so pertinent to the thought of men and women at this time that we are glad to present the following selections to our readers:

"Never did another graduating class during Brown's 150 years go out into a world so dark as that which the class of 1915 is about to enter. The whole of civilization seems to have been cast into a pit. Into the mire and darkness have tumbled cathedrals, universities, thriving cities, peaceful villages, and waving harvest fields. Into the pit have literally descended millions of Europe's choicest young men, treated as 'cannon fodder.' Into the pit have gone our dreamers—poets, musicians, statesmen, priests—and have carried with them our fond hopes that the last war had been fought; that the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World, was about to be established. This is the day of apparent triumph for the cynic and the scoffer. \* \* \*

"The great powers of the modern world seem to mock our clear-eyed college men and women. Science, misunderstood and perverted, would consign us all to the 'fell clutch of circumstance' and the domination of physical law. Philosophy, interpreted by Nietzsche, would tell us that hatred is a biological necessity and the Christian religion an oriental dream not to be reconciled with occidental progress.

"The world powers seem to conspire to tell the college graduate that he is a chaser of rainbows, and try to fling him and his altruistic dreams down into the pit of pessimism and despair. Will you, men and women of 1915, go there? Or will you die rather than adopt the pit philosophy and surrender your faith in humanity and in God?

"We may grant at once that the dreams of youth seldom come true in their original form. They are only rough sketches of the statue that is some day to be hewn out of the solid marble. But unless we have some kind of rough sketch we shall never carve our statue. If we cannot dream, there is no hope that we can achieve. \* \* \*

"The New Testament is psychologically as well as religiously right when it says: 'If thou canst believe—all things are possible to him that believeth.' But the belief demanded by the Bible is not belief in propositions, but in possibilities. It is faith in human nature, such as Christ had when he saw in fickle Peter the rock, and in Mary Magdalen one worthy to be immortalized. It is belief in the value of human effort in education, philanthropy, science, and art. It is belief in the educability of the race, in the progress of humanity, in the infinite value of apostle and prophet and martyr. It is belief in the worth of one's own personality, and the refusal to rest in any petty success we have achieved. It is belief that God's tomorrow is to be finer and fairer than all our yesterdays, and that it is 'the last of life for which the first was made.'

"The last essential to the realization of a dream is that

it shall include the welfare of all humanity. A noble vision is all-inclusive and covers the whole horizon.

"I charge every member of the graduating class to hold steadily before him the hope and vision of a league of all the nations to maintain an enduring peace. It has been a source of great satisfaction to me during the last tragic year that our Brown students have done nothing tending to inflame racial passion or embroil us in European war. We have let others hurl 'explosive adjectives and forty-two centimeter verbs,' and we have tried to understand before we denounce. But our peace efforts must be more than negative. They must involve something more compelling than abstinence and limitation. They must be constructive and heroic efforts to find a new way of settling the ancient feuds of the world.

"War is old—pathetically old, tragically futile, hopelessly antiquated. Peace—peace heroic and sacrificial—is the new vision which only young men can really believe in. Thousands around us are realizing the biblical description of old age: 'They shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way.' But the policy of fear and force has utterly broken down. Fear has created the conflagration now burning. The nations that have trusted in force are precisely the ones today attacked by the largest number of enemies.

"They that have taken the sword are perishing by the sword. The impossibility that of two nations each shall become stronger than the other on land and sea is now tragically demonstrated. All the world can now see the difference between the boundary line between Italy and Austria defended on both sides by bristling fortresses erected at incredible expense, and the boundary line between Canada and the United States defended by goodwill and co-operation.

"Will you young men and women hold to the vision of a world-wide pact of peace? Can you stand the ridicule of those whose only hope is in bayonets and howitzers? Can you endure the scorn of those who have no faith in any nation except their own, and no faith in any argument save brute force? If our country shall be plunged into war every man of you would, I hope, be ready to go to the front. You would die nobly if that be the way to serve the cause of justice and freedom.

"Be now as resolute and heroic in time of peace as in time of war. Face the scepticism and materialism of the age as unflinchingly as you would face bullets. Stand by your dreams as you would stand by your colors. Then in God's good time, it may be in ten years, it may be in a thousand, the dream you refused to surrender shall come gloriously true."

... Co-operative internationalism was the slogan of the International Conference of Women Workers to Promote Permanent Peace, which was held in San Francisco from July 4 to 7. The conference stood for the creation of three organized expressions of world consciousness—a world legislature or international parliament, a world judiciary or international court, and a world police or international army.